



CHRISTIAN SCIENCE Sentinel

"What I say unto you I say unto all, Watch." — JESUS

JULY-DECEMBER 2013 jsh-online.com



A COLLECTION FOR TEENS

THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE
JOURNAL, SENTINEL, HERALD

Published by
The Christian Science Publishing Society

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Gabriel at summer camp with horse, Decker.



COURTESY PHOTO

Biking blessings

by GABRIEL JOHNSTON

One afternoon in March 2012, I was at my house after school. I didn't have much homework, so I decided to find something to do that would be a good use of my time.

All of a sudden this angel message came to me: "God is all around us." I really enjoy building with Lego blocks so I had the idea to build a church out of them. I named it "The Church of God," representing the idea that everything is in God's control and everyone is safe in God's arms. In *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, Mary Baker Eddy describes Church as "the structure of Truth and Love; whatever rests upon and proceeds from divine Principle" (p. 583). The next morning, while I was preparing to go to school, I remember thinking about Church and how everyone on earth is in it, including me.

As part of the physical fitness portion of the Congressional Award (a national service/leadership award), which I have been working on for almost two years, I ride my bicycle to and from school every day. It had snowed the night before, so the pavement that morning was very slick, making it hard to stop quickly. When I arrived at one of the busiest intersections on my route, I waited for the cars to stop so I could cross the street. When the cross traffic had a red light and I had a "Walk" sign, I started riding across the intersection. There was a car coming in my direction a ways down

the street. I really didn't notice the car until it took a left turn, heading straight toward me. By then it was too late for me to move out of the way, and I was hit.

Immediately after the crash, I remembered this quote from the Bible: "For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone" (Psalms 91:11, 12). I really like this quote because it assures me that God is always there for me—even if I literally "dash my foot" against a stone or face any other kind of trouble.

Once I got up off the ground, I realized I was not hurt except for a scratch on my leg—that being the case, I still felt angry at the woman driving the car. I was able to walk fine, but my bike was quite damaged. I assured the concerned driver that I was fine, and exchanged contact information with her. I decided that I could still ride my bike and made it to school on time.

The driver contacted my mom. So she phoned the school. I was called to the office, and I let my mom know that I wasn't hurt. Throughout the day, I was definitely thinking about how I'd been protected by God. I had a productive school day, and my mom picked me up after school to take my bike in for repairs. She told me how wonderful it is that God is always there for us.

I needed to make sure I wasn't mad at the driver, because love is neces-

*Love is necessary
for the world to be
harmonious.*

sary for the world to be harmonious. I prayed to fill my thought with ideas from God. Some of the ideas I prayed with included: We are the perfect reflection of God; there are no accidents in God's kingdom (see *Science and Health*, p. 424); and we all can listen and be in tune with divine Love. Nothing could take away or destroy the bond we, as God's people, naturally have with God and each other.

My mom and I went to two different bicycle shops to get the best repair estimate. Eventually, I decided to get a new

bike and found the right one. The demonstration of God's care felt complete when the driver came to our house and paid us what it would have cost to repair my damaged bike.

I will always appreciate the idea behind "The Church of God" I built with Lego blocks—the omnipresence, omniscience, and omnipotence of God is always there for me, no matter what. ●

Gabriel Johnston will be a junior in high school in the fall and enjoys biking and hanging out with his friends.

Originally published in the July 1, 2013, issue of the *Christian Science Sentinel*.

'Let God do the work'

by EMELIE FREDRIKSON

I was so excited! We'd won our soccer game to make our team record 12 wins and 3 losses, and to top it off, I'd scored a goal.

In joyful spirit, I was home doing my homework after the game. Suddenly my foot was in a lot of pain. I couldn't remember hurting it, so my initial reaction was confusion.

Then, when my foot became increasingly painful, I went downstairs to find my mom and ask if she could please read me an article on Christian Science. We sat down in her room and she got out one of her favorite articles from the *Sentinel* and began reading. I didn't remember a single word, though, since my thought was completely occupied with the pain.

My mom stopped reading as soon as she could tell I was having trouble

thinking clearly. She comforted me and told me, "Eme, we need to get rid of this fear." I began to cry, not only because I was afraid of the issue not going away, but also because we had another soccer game the following day and I wanted to feel 100 percent.

We decided to call a Christian Science practitioner, and though I don't remember anything particular that she said, I do remember how I felt the calm conviction in her voice as she spoke. It was getting late, so my mom suggested I move to the couch and listen to recordings of hymns from the *Christian Science Hymnal*.

I tried to get up off the bed, but I couldn't really walk. I felt so limited and restricted. Then I realized this was exactly what mortal mind was trying to tell me. When I took another step, I

I was not happy for any selfish reason, but because our team had been really working together.

realized that divine Mind, God, was in control, not the pain. Mind was the only power. To complete this thought, once I was helped to the couch, my mom said to me that I could, “Let God do the work.” That’s when things fell into place. I realized that this was not my work to do, but God’s. I had to keep my thought open to His goodness and healing power, which I most definitely was doing, and God would do the rest.

It reminded me of something from an article, within a book, that my coach gave our soccer team. I read it before each game to get my thought on track. It talks about how, if your work is becoming a burden, then you need to stop and put the responsibility in God’s hands, because that’s really where it belongs. You can let go of the burden before you start up your work again because a feeling of “heaviness” doesn’t give glory to God (see Mary Kimball Morgan, *Education at The Principia*, p. 222). I was able to drop the burden and let God take care of me. I fell asleep listening to hymns. The following morning, I woke up with much less pain and was able to walk fine. I still wanted to play in that afternoon’s game, but I knew if I did, I would need to be able to play properly in order to give the most to my team.

I kept going about my day, and then about mid-way through, I got an e-mail from the practitioner I was working with. She gave me a quote from Mary Baker Eddy’s *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* to think about: “The sinless joy,—the perfect harmony and immortality of Life, possessing unlimited divine beauty and goodness without a single bodily pleasure or pain,—constitutes the only veritable, indestructible man, whose being is spiritual. This state of existence is scientific and intact ...” (p. 76). The first part of the quote mentioned, “sinless joy.” That was what I had been experienc-

ing before the pain, I realized. I was not happy for any selfish reason, but because our team had been really working together on the field, and this was special. We were expressing God’s harmony and nothing could disturb that expression. And by expressing sinless joy, this meant I could possess (from the next part of the quote) “goodness without a single bodily ... pain.” There was no way that an injury was going to override these facts. And I didn’t have to expect just partial healing, either.

In the locker room later on, I continued to pray and work with lots of truths that had been shared with me. Our game began, and I was so focused on my responsibilities on the field that I wasn’t aware of any pain—it soon dissolved completely and didn’t return. I saw that I had an understanding of God and His truthful spiritual facts always within me.

The game turned out to be one of our team’s best, and it was the greatest feeling in the world to know that we all gave our best effort for each other’s success. I didn’t have an issue with my foot again, and I was so grateful for this quick and powerful healing. ●

Emelie Fredrikson is going to be a senior in high school in the fall and likes sports, photography, and traveling with her family.

Emelie passes the ball forward as center midfielder.



Originally published in the July 15, 2013, issue of the *Christian Science Sentinel*.

Wednesday evening unplugged

by SUSAN TISH

Several students in our Sunday School have enjoyed attending a Christian Science summer camp each year. In late summer they come back from camp and one of the things they rave about is how much they enjoyed attending Wednesday night testimony meetings with all the other campers. They love the testimonies from other kids and teens and the fellowship of singing hymns together after the meeting. So our Sunday School teachers got together to ponder and pray about providing a Wednesday meeting where young people would feel that same sense of communion and joy.

We have a wide range of ages represented at our Sunday School, but it is a truly close knit group. We decided to provide a Wednesday evening testimony meeting once a month that would focus on youth. While every testimony meeting has a message that blesses all, we strive on “Youth Wednesdays” to have a topic that focuses on an issue that is relevant to our Sunday School students.

Everyone enjoys hearing from our Sunday School students.

Our First Reader provides a printout of the readings from the Bible and Mary Baker Eddy’s *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* so the kids and teens can easily follow along and have a handout to take home. We ask one student to volunteer as an assistant usher and hand the microphone around to testifiers. Finally, we regularly end these youth-focused services with a brief hymn sing where we invite “kid requests” for hymns that we all sing together.

We now have a regular group of students who come once a month (and sometimes more often). On their own, they started sitting together at the meetings and have also begun to share testimonies. The interesting thing is, we also get a better turnout of adult participants at these meetings because

everyone enjoys hearing from our Sunday School students. This fresh idea has really blessed our whole congregation. ●

Susan Tish is a Sunday School teacher at First Church of Christ, Scientist, Plymouth, Michigan.



COURTESY PHOTO

Originally published in the July 22 & 29, 2013, issue of the *Christian Science Sentinel*.

Suddenly you know why you're there

This article was originally posted as a "Dear Me" blog on time4thinkers.com. The site's "Dear Me" series asks bloggers to write a letter to themselves at a specific moment in their life, past or future. It's a creative way to share what they've learned with the rest of us.

Dear Daniel,

You're lying on the damp grass in the backyard of an abandoned house. It's late summer, and the humidity of the air is still palpable even though it's past sunset. Mosquitoes swarm around you, making you even more uncomfortable. The voices of your friends and classmates meander out the broken window across the yard over to your secluded spot in the dark. They're on their fifth game of beer pong and show no signs of slowing down. Less than two hours ago you thought that you and some friends were going to see a movie. How did you end up here? And more important: What's the point?

High school isn't easy. Classes can be challenging, and the added problems of peer pressure and social drinking don't help. You've been taught since you were

little that man is inherently good, and that goodness is a spiritual quality that comes straight from God. But at this point in your life, this goodness is hard to see. You're trying to live your life in the way that best reflects this goodness, but over and over you find yourself in situations where others put you down for your choices, or shun you for refusing to drink.

You slap one mosquito, then another. It seems so unfair that living a good, spiritually based life has landed you in this insect-filled yard in the middle of nowhere.

Maybe there isn't some grand plan for your life. Maybe God doesn't exist?

But even as these thoughts swirl through your head, something keeps you in that yard.

Like your being there has a purpose—even though that seems far fetched at the moment. Eventually, around 2 a.m., your classmates begin stumbling out of the house to head home. Most have walked here and live close by, but it looks like some drove as well. You watch as one of your classmates trips over himself several times as he struggles to pull his keys out of his pocket. There's no way he can be thinking about driving home in that condition. He's easily well over

You have an opportunity here to do good.



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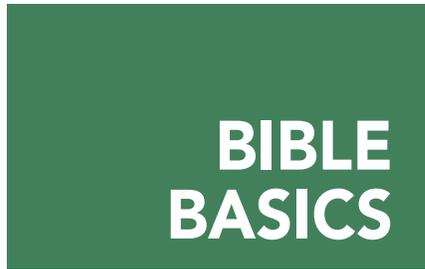
the legal limit; he's also under 21. Other classmates begin piling into the back of his car and the whole situation begins to look truly alarming and unsafe.

Suddenly you get it. You know why you're there, that you have a purpose, that this goodness you value so much has a place.

Just because others ignore or are hostile to you doesn't mean you have to reciprocate those feelings. You have an opportunity here to do good. You'll take

the wheel. You'll make sure your classmates get home safely. For the first time, you see so clearly that God does have a plan that includes you—and even those who would shun you. After dropping off the last person, you realize that this night did end up meaning something. You found the good you had been so desperately looking for.

Sincerely,
Daniel



Watch and learn!

Whether you're new to the Bible and looking for a way in, or you just want a refresher on some key ideas, these short videos from TMC Youth's time4thinkers.com have got you covered.

time4thinkers.com/blog/biblebasics/



Originally published in the August 12, 2013, issue of the *Christian Science Sentinel*.

Bright ideas

by COURTNEY HAYES

A few years ago, I had a healing that deepened my understanding of God's creation and my place in this creation.

I had observed many warts growing on my hands, but wasn't aware of what they were or that I could pray to find healing. When I showed them to my parents, we talked, and they let me know I had the option of handling the situation through medicine or prayer, but that it wouldn't be right to ignore the problem. I decided I would choose prayer be-

cause it had been effective for me before.

I started praying by thinking about God's entire creation. I struggled with the question of why God would create a wart, something ugly and so unlike the good His creation is supposed to be. Did He actually create something ugly? The answer came in an epiphany that, like in so many other healings, reintroduced an idea I already knew, but in a fresh way.

I remembered a healing of altitude sickness I'd had the year before. The

healing had occurred at a camp for Christian Scientists located in the heart of the Rocky Mountains in Colorado. I was feeling dizzy as our group was ascending a massive 14,000-foot peak. In praying then, I'd looked at the vast forest, mountains, and clouds surrounding me. A statement came to me from the first chapter of Genesis: "And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good" (verse 31). That was the key! God made everything and He made it all good. He made me and my fellow campers. He made nature and man to live in peace, not harm one another. He would never create two things to war with each other. Therefore, the battle with the altitude wasn't from God. God's universe is united and whole, not divided and battling. Soon the dizziness subsided and I felt energized and ready to continue hiking.

I thought about this past healing as I began to pray about the warts. And I began to see that God hadn't created the warts at all. I turned to the weekly Christian Science Bible Lesson for inspiration and found some ideas about God and good. Mary Baker Eddy, the founder of Christian Science, states on page 286 of *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, "In the Saxon and twenty other tongues *good* is the term for God. The Scriptures declare all that He made to be good, like Himself,—good in Principle and in idea. Therefore the spiritual universe is good, and reflects God as He is." God's goodness runs so deep, and includes those of all cultures and nations. God, good, could never create illnesses or physical defects, like altitude sickness or warts, to harm the good in His universe. These bright ideas of Truth were angel



messages from God, and I received many more.

I continued to pray with the idea of freedom from limitation and physical deformity. Hymn 412 provided some inspiration:

O dreamer, leave thy dreams for joyful waking,
 O captive, rise and sing, for thou art free;
 The Christ is here, all dreams of error breaking,
 Unloosing bonds of all captivity.
 (Rosa M. Turner)

I thought of myself as the dreamer or captive in the hymn. I've had many experiences of waking up from bad dreams and discovering their nothingness. This freedom from the nothingness of dreams was totally relatable. I just had to "wake up" from the dream that there were warts covering my fingers and be awake to the presence of God's goodness, awake to healing. These warts had no identity and were definitely not mine. They were not part of God's creation either.

Once I recognized and accepted these truths, the warts began to painlessly disappear. Within two weeks, the healing was complete. No remnants of scarring existed on my hands. It was as if the warts had never been there. They haven't reappeared.

I am grateful for God's healing goodness and the united and free nature of His kingdom. ●

Courtney Hayes will be a junior at University of the Pacific in the fall. She loves riding and showing her horses and reading books by Jane Austen.

Originally published in the August 26, 2013, issue of the *Christian Science Sentinel*.

There's a new Mary Baker Eddy biography ...

Jenny Nelles and Jeff Ward-Bailey, the *Sentinel's* Teen Editors, give you a glimpse into a new biography from The Christian Science Publishing Society: *A World More Bright: The Life of Mary Baker Eddy* by Isabel Ferguson and Heather Vogel Frederick. What makes this biography different from the rest? While the book certainly appeals to all ages, it was written with youth in mind.

Jenny: As someone who enjoys reading biographies in general, this book really spoke to me. It was cool to see an emphasis on how Mary Baker Eddy navigated relationships with family, friends, and even people who called themselves her enemies and pretty much made it their goal in life to bring her down. A lot has been said about her discipline and how spiritually empowered she was, but it really struck me how she also handled things with so much love and a readiness to forgive. She wasn't a pushover, but she gave people so many opportunities to make things right. Her spirituality and her deep devotion to God really informed all of her actions. I think that's a lesson we can all learn!

Jeff: That's true—plus, not many of these instances were small misunderstandings with friends and family. Mary Baker Eddy was one of the most famous women in the United States in her day, and under her direction the Christian Science Church grew to include tens of thousands of people and important media activities, so those attacks against her were really very public. The fact that she engaged so lovingly with those try-

ing to discredit her character and destroy her work really shows how she was animated only by love—by what she'd discovered of God's love.

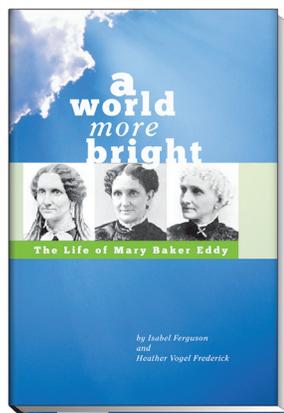
Jenny: There are many places in the book where I found out about something I never knew before. Especially in terms of family. For example, I always thought Mary Baker Eddy's son, George, disappeared from her life after he was taken to live with the Cheney family as a boy, and to some extent this was true. But this book details several visits George made to Boston and talks about how his family would travel from out West, sometimes surprising Mrs. Eddy.

I got the sense that George was brash in his manners, but that he loved his mother in his own way, not really "getting" what her healing work was all about. The book talks about how he would have probably preferred a "normal" mom who cooked and cleaned.

I also liked seeing pictures of the gifts mother and son gave one another. In one, there is a photo of the Black Hills Gold pin George gave her. At one point, Mary Baker Eddy had a house built for her son and his family as a surprise. Seeing the photo for myself really showed her generosity of spirit.

Jeff: The authors also did a really good job explaining how Mrs. Eddy started to develop her ideas about God, and about spirituality in general. A lot of people who have grown up in Christian Science are used to concepts like healing without medicine, but those are (and were, a cen-

tury ago) revolutionary concepts! Mrs. Eddy tried lots of different treatments during her early years, including conventional medicine as well as homeopathy and things like the “water cure.” Her experiences with those treatments gradually led her to wonder whether someone’s faith in the ability of a drug to heal or harm, might somehow be linked to their physical health. And of course, later that led her to the clarity that not matter, but God, Spirit, heals. The book shows us how she got to that point, jotting down notes and questioning everything along the way.



*A World
More Bright:
The Life of
Mary Baker
Eddy*
by Isabel Ferguson
and Heather Vogel
Frederick
The Christian
Science Publishing
Society

Jenny: I looked for mentions of teenagers while reading. One page described one of two times Mrs. Eddy addressed the congregation in her newly built Mother Church. I liked this part: “Her topic on that May morning was sin and the need for repentance, yet a teenager who attended the service described Mrs. Eddy afterwards in a letter home as ‘all love. You simply feel as if she was your best friend’” (p. 147). It can be pretty tough to talk about “sin” without sounding morally superior. But Mrs. Eddy knew exactly how to touch the heart without making someone feel judged. It’s this kind of love that redeems and heals.

Another time, the book talks about how Emma Shipman (one of the early workers in the Christian Science movement) described Mrs. Eddy as she taught her last class on Christian Science. Mrs. Eddy was “perfectly natural. She was ever alert, with a keen sense of wit

and humor, and at the same time, her listening attitude to hear what God would give her to say was apparent” (p. 161). How many times have we been healed by humor? I loved that the descriptions didn’t feel abstract.

Jeff: The book also describes what Mrs. Eddy’s life was like when she was a teenager, which I’d never thought about before. She was young once, of course, and she had to learn lessons, too, just like we all do. I especially liked the book’s discussion about the Baker daughters’ dating lives. Apparently their father, Mark Baker, had a habit of stepping into the room when

boys came over and announcing sternly, “Let all conversation and pleasure be in harmony with the will of God” (p. 20). I can picture Mary and her sisters being absolutely mortified at that!

I loved hearing some of the quips and anecdotes and metaphors that Mrs. Eddy peppered her teaching with. One student quoted her as saying: “Christian Scientists should so live that they will not need to tune themselves like a violin when they are called upon to help—they always should be prepared and ready to meet the need” (p. 94). Isn’t that great?

Jenny: I also liked the sidebars and informational sections that brought out areas of interest and taught me more about the time period.

Jeff: I liked those, too. I think it’s easy to forget that Mary Baker Eddy was shaped to a certain extent by the time and place

in which she lived. So it was fun to learn about the temperance movement in the United States (in which she was active), and about the Battle of Bull Run in the Civil War, and about religious reformers whose work Mrs. Eddy was familiar with—that background helped me get a better sense of who she was as a person, and what kind of world she was living in.

I think my favorite sidebar was the one on page 82, which showed a page of the Wycliffe Bible from the 14th century, which includes the phrase “science and health” in its translation of Luke 1:77. The phrase “science and health” was in the Bible all along, but Mary Baker Eddy didn’t discover this until about six months after she’d selected that as the title for her book!

The book also describes what Mrs. Eddy’s life was like when she was a teenager.

The sidebars also reminded me that Mary Baker Eddy interacted with lots of public figures in her day—people like Mark Twain and Bronson Alcott. Knowing a little bit more about them helped me remember that Mrs. Eddy didn’t spend her whole life as this quiet woman cloistered away somewhere; she engaged with the best minds of her era, and Christian Science drew lots of support (and hostility) from the famous thinkers of the late 19th and early 20th century.

Jenny: I’m all for sharing the books we get for our office shelves, but now I definitely want a copy of my own. ●

Originally published in the September 9, 2013, issue of the *Christian Science Sentinel*.

Expect healing

by ALEXANDRA WEITMAN

Last summer, I went on a trip with my basketball team to a tournament. In our second game, in the second quarter, I landed on my ankle wrong and could barely run or walk. I was so disappointed because I was looking forward to being a leader of the team and excited to become better as an individual player and a team player.

As I sat on the bench, I began to think about how this could have happened if God was everywhere. Many thoughts raced through my head, suggesting that I could somehow be stopped from fully expressing God. Under my coach’s direction, I iced my ankle for a little while, but before I knew it, it had become the size of a softball. My coach kept telling me I

wouldn't be able to play for the rest of the tournament if my ankle stayed that size. His comments were upsetting to me, and I was frustrated.

The team went back to the hotel after the game and relaxed. I was able to reach out to my mom who was on the trip with us. I hobbled to her room, and we read the Christian Science Bible Lesson. The subject that week was "Truth." We then began to talk about how thought truly governs one's experience, and since thought is governed by God, and there is only one Mind, then I could only reflect that one Mind. This opened my thinking to the idea that knowing Truth can be instantaneous.

One concept that was helpful was thinking of my situation as a math equation. $2+2$ always equals 4, never more, never less. Understanding this concept doesn't have to take time. It is immediate. And even if people began walking around with signs saying " $2+2=5$," I wouldn't believe it, because I know it's not true. I don't have to force $2+2$ to equal 4, it just does.

That totally made sense to me. It seemed as if I was a victim of: a hurt ankle + downtrodden thoughts + material opinions about my progress = me not being able to play. But I saw that I could pray to know who I was spiritually. I was in God's care, whole and free. Just because it appeared I was injured and hurt, didn't mean I had to accept it as reality. So, even if my ankle still resembled a softball, I knew I was a spiritual idea and could expect to see healing.

For the rest of the day, I continued to spend time with my basketball team.

*I was never apart
from God at
any time.*

I knew that nothing could limit me from having a fun time with my friends, and I was able to sleep soundly that night.

The next day, there was no swelling at all. I was able to walk and move without any trouble or pain. My first thought was how grateful I was to God for showing me the truth that I was never apart from God or good at any time. I taped up my ankle for that game so my coach wouldn't worry. I played the best game I have ever played!

This was evidence to me that I can always rely on Truth and it will meet the immediate need. ●

Besides basketball, Alexandra also likes playing soccer, running cross country, and doing karate. She also plays piano, tenor saxophone, and a little bit of ukulele.



Alexandra takes a jump shot during a home game.

Originally published in the September 23, 2013, issue of the *Christian Science Sentinel*.

My 24/7 pastor

by NIKLAS PESCHKE

Over the past four years I have had the most incredible experiences with my National Leadership Council (NLC) group. NLC is a four-year program for high school students sponsored by DiscoveryBound, a youth group for Christian Scientists. My group includes 20 other kids who are all working toward similar goals with “servant leadership” as a focus. The program has challenged me to grow in so many ways.

I’m especially grateful that it requires us to have concrete spiritual goals each year—this requirement has helped me dive deeper into Christian Science and see how practical it is in my life.

One of my spiritual goals this past year was to read through *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* by Mary Baker Eddy. I prayed about how I could dedicate quality time to this goal since I am pretty busy with all of my school activities, and sometimes it feels like there isn’t enough time in the day. As I prayed, I realized that one of the freer times I had during the day was on my 30-minute bus ride to school early in the morning. I decided to add *Science and Health* to my phone, which made it really easy to read for a good chunk of time and even highlight ideas and take notes. In fact, I got into the habit of copying inspiring passages and sending them as text mes-

sages to my family in the morning. My early morning study time was like seeds taking root in my thought, and I experienced some great healings as a result of wanting to put into practice what I was learning.

I’m a runner on my high school track team, and I compete in triple jump and mid-distance events. Around that time I had been pushing myself pretty hard in training, and one night I woke up with a searing pain in my calf. I tried to get up to stretch it out, but I found I couldn’t even stand on that leg. At first I was really worried because I had a lot going on at school the next day,

and I wanted to be better. But then I decided to turn on the light and open my copy of *Science and Health*, which was on my bedside table. I love that the pastor in Christian Science—the Bible and *Science and Health*—is always available, day or night, wherever you are.

The paragraph I opened to was just like a light bulb in my consciousness! It couldn’t have been more perfect for my situation: “Muscles are not self-acting. If mind does not move them, they are motionless. Hence the great fact that Mind alone enlarges and empowers man through its mandate,—by reason of its demand for and supply of power. Not because of muscular exercise, but by reason

*I felt so loved
by God, and I
could see how
He communicates
directly with me.*

Nik stands with his friend, Tim, in front of the skyline of Cusco, Peru.



COURTESY PHOTO

of the blacksmith's faith in exercise, his arm becomes stronger" (p. 199). Not only were these ideas perfect for me in that moment, but I also felt so loved by God, and I could see how He communicates directly with me, whatever my particular need is at any time. The pain subsided and I felt calm. As I went back to sleep, I thought about how it's really the divine Mind that governs me, not muscles. When I woke up the next morning, I could walk and run in track without any problem. I haven't had a pain like that again.

Another amazing experience that happened as a result of my spiritual study came about when I was on a service trip to Peru with my NLC class this past summer. There were so many instances where I had to put into practice what I was learning. For example, one night when our group was traveling back from Machu Picchu, toward the end of our trip, I suddenly felt queasy. I didn't want to eat dinner, which is very unlike me, as my group knows! We had a lot of travel ahead of us in the next few days, and I really wanted to feel healthy. I wasn't sure how I was going to make it, but then my group leader took me aside and reminded me of the power of prayer.

She said: "You do not need to let this control you. You can be free right now."

Her direct and clear approach—and her conviction in my health—really helped me. That night, my best friend spent time reading the Bible and *Science and Health* to me while I was resting. I felt so comforted by his support, and I knew the rest of my group was praying, too. I had a good night's rest and when I woke up early the next morning, I felt great! I ate a normal breakfast and was packed and ready to travel from Cuzco to Lima to catch our flight home.

Christian Science is so relatable and useful for me. In fact, I've been able to share a lot of ideas about the spiritual nature of health with my friends at school who ask me questions about my faith and want to know more. I'm incredibly grateful for this spiritual perspective on life. ●

Niklas Peschke is a senior in high school. He loves playing trumpet in his school's jazz, concert, and marching bands, and runs track and cross country.

Originally published in the October 7, 2013, issue of the *Christian Science Sentinel*.



Love your teacher as yourself

This article was originally posted as a “Dear Me” blog on time4thinkers.com. The site’s “Dear Me” series asks bloggers to write a letter to themselves at a specific moment in their life, past or future.

Dear Heather,

Your rant fills the kitchen. This piano class is a nightmare. While your roommate listens, you rattle off your complaints. Your teacher is too condescending and sets unrealistic expectations. She is the cause of your bad grades and slow learning, as well as your lack of confidence. But when you pause to take a breath, your roommate startles you with this question: “Why are you taking this class if you don’t enjoy it?”

Her words play on constant repeat for a couple of hours. Why did you choose this class your senior year? Several reasons come to mind. You love playing music. You want to improve your piano skills. But this teacher! You went into this with the right attitude and the right motives. Why is she ruining everything by making you feel like you can’t get any better?

“Love your neighbor as yourself” (Matthew 22:39, New International Version). This simple idea breaks through your swirl of thoughts. Instead of dwelling on the teacher’s negative qualities, it would be beneficial to see her good qualities. Jesus preached love and was able to love Judas, even after Judas betrayed him. This situation is *much* less extreme,

and there are positive qualities to love in this teacher. She enjoys playing the piano just as much as you do, and she is teaching this class to help you improve—not to intimidate you.

And what about loving yourself—your own God-given abilities? That’s key to loving your teacher, too. Since God is infinite, and you reflect this infinitude, you have everything you need in order to improve. When you see that your teacher can’t stop your growth, and that progress is inevitable when you draw on spiritual resources, you’ll discover that it’s not even hard to love.

Tomorrow, in class, you’ll find that the atmosphere is quite different. Instead of responding defensively to your teacher, you’ll thank her for her advice. She’ll acknowledge the improvements you’ve been making, and for the first time, both of you will appreciate what the other is trying to do. And this change will be permanent. You’ll start to enjoy the class, and even your grade will change dramatically, for the better.

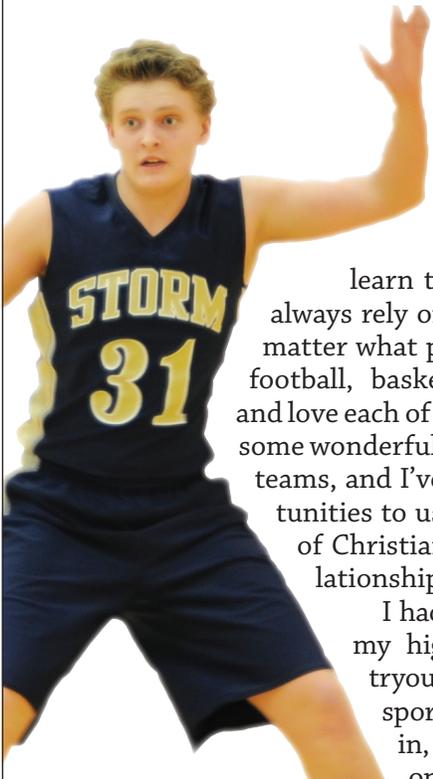
Soon, you’ll see this whole situation from a new perspective, and it’s a lesson you won’t ever forget. Love really is “*reflected in love*” (Mary Baker Eddy, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, p. 17). Yielding to God’s view can and does alter our course.

Lots of love,
Heather

Originally published in the October 21, 2013, issue of the *Christian Science Sentinel*.

Blessings at basketball tryouts

by ISAIAH KENT-SCHNEIDER



COURTESY PHOTO

I knew that all my ability came from God.

I have attended a Christian Science Sunday School since I was a little kid. Sunday School helps me in my life, and I love what I learn there. I have come to always rely on God to help me no matter what problem arises. I play football, basketball, and baseball, and love each of these sports. I've had some wonderful experiences with my teams, and I've found many opportunities to use my understanding of Christian Science and my relationship with God.

I had a nice experience in my high school basketball tryouts. Basketball is a sport I've always excelled in, and I have been on very competitive teams. When I came to high school, I felt a little nervous about the tryouts because the coaches didn't know me as well, and I felt the need to impress them. I played hard, but the first day of tryouts my shot was off and I was struggling. I kept working hard and giving it my best, excelling in some areas but still having no success shooting the ball. When I got home that night, I was upset and feeling frustrated. I decided to pray with some of the things I'd learned in Sunday School.

Part of what I examined was the idea of my relying on just my own hu-

man abilities, versus putting my faith in God and letting Him take control. A verse from the Bible I looked up was "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Philippians 4:13). I knew that I was God's child and could express only good qualities in everything I did—this included accuracy, speed, agility, and mental focus. I knew that all my ability came from God.

I also asked my aunt to pray with me for the remainder of the tryouts. She gave me some spiritual ideas to hold on to, including the idea that it was my divine right to demand only good, to notice that God's goodness was with me and with everyone on the court. We looked at this statement in *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* by Mary Baker Eddy: "Spirit is symbolized by strength, presence, and power, and also by holy thoughts, winged with Love" (p. 512). I decided the next day that when things went well, I'd just mentally say, "Thank you, God." And if there were moments when things were not going well, I would not give up or be discouraged.

The next few days of tryouts went well. My shot was much better than the first day, and I did end up making the team. Most important, though, I'm glad that I learned to turn to God instead of giving up. ●

Isaiah "Zaiah" Kent-Schneider is a junior in high school. In addition to sports, he is involved in leadership and academic clubs. In his free time, he likes to lift weights and hang out with friends.

Upper left: Zaiah stays open for the pass.

Originally published in the October 21, 2013, issue of the *Christian Science Sentinel*.

Clear communication

by EMMA JANE PENDLETON

Last summer, just before my freshman year in college, I worked as an engineering intern at a manufacturing plant in Oklahoma. The company I worked for makes machines that fuse pipes together. I worked with men in the prototype shop, who were all fun and laid-back people. I really enjoyed watching them design machine parts and helping them actually make the parts. I learned a lot about mechanical engineering as they taught me how to use the mills and machines.

After working around these men for a while, I realized that there was one thing they did that made me unhappy and uncomfortable. Many of the men I worked with in the shop used a lot of curse words in their sentences, and I heard a lot of profanity. It seemed to just be a habit for them—I don't think they ever thought there was anything wrong with using these words. At first I just tried to ignore the profanity. But as I continued to hear it day after day, my love for my work began to wane. My parents had taught me not to use curse words, and they didn't use them either, so I'd never heard this kind of language so constantly before. It really bothered me and diminished the happiness of the environment.

When I realized that these men were going to continue using this kind of language, I thought of what I'd learned in Christian Science about how man—meaning all men and women—was really created. The Bible says that man was made by God, who is the only cause and creator (see Genesis, chapter 1). Once I

realized this, I also knew that the only thing that the men in the shop could reflect was constant righteousness and good coming directly from God.

I told my Sunday School teacher about what was going on at work, and he talked to me about the spiritual definition of *man*. In *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* by Mary Baker Eddy, *man* is defined as “the compound idea of infinite Spirit; the spiritual image and likeness of God; the full representation of Mind” (p. 591). Together,

my teacher and I looked up the definition of the word *compound* and found it meant something was made up of two or more separate elements. My teacher then asked me what I thought those elements of infinite Spirit might be. After thinking about it for a minute, I told him that I knew those elements could only be things like:

- Goodness, righteousness
- Filling our consciousness with only spiritual ideas
- Reflecting God constantly
- Following the rules of divine Principle
- Only doing helpful things

After talking about these spiritual elements, my teacher then showed me a line in *Science and Health* that says: “Man reflects infinite Truth, Life, and Love” (p. 94). Since Truth, Life, and Love were all capitalized, I knew they referred to God. Knowing this told me that everyone, including the men I worked with, must reflect God. Once I realized this, I saw that God was handling the situation

The men I worked with couldn't be prevented from seeing their true, spiritual selves.

Emma Jane stands inside a 65-inch pipe fusion machine that was built in the shop.

and that the men I worked with couldn't be prevented from seeing their true, spiritual selves. I wasn't sure how this might happen, but I knew that God would lead me in the right direction.

The next day, I was working in the workshop with these men, toward the end of the day, and we were having a fun time talking with each other while using the mills. We were all laughing and being silly when one of the guys made a joke and used two curse words in it. His joke made us all laugh, and while laughing with a big smile on my face, I heard myself saying to them all, "Hey, come on, I know you're all of higher quality than to use language like that."



I hadn't been planning to say it, and because everyone had been laughing and the machines were making a lot of noise, I wasn't sure if anyone had even heard. However, the next day at work, I noticed that the amount of profanity had dropped hugely, and yet everyone still had their happy, cheerful, silly conversations. I worked the rest of the summer with these men and had a much more comfortable time with them. I am so grateful for Christian Science and all the help we receive from the things we learn in Sunday school. ●

Emma Jane Pendleton is a sophomore in college and is majoring in mechanical engineering. She also enjoys playing the fiddle and singing with her family band.

Originally published in the November 4, 2013, issue of the *Christian Science Sentinel*.

'Simple' ideas can heal

by ALEX MIETCHEN

"God is love" (I John 4:8). Those three words, combined with the most basic ideas of Christian Science, helped me when I played in a soccer tournament.

I had been playing basketball with my friends in gym class and rolled my left ankle as I came down from a rebound. Immediately, I walked over to the side of the court and thought about the upcoming weekend. I was supposed to travel to

Nevada to play in a regional soccer tournament with my team. Teams from all over Utah, Nevada, and Arizona would be participating in the tournament, which qualifies teams for nationals.

The injury happened on a Wednesday, and we were set to play our first game at 2 p.m. on Friday. I initially thought that the injury was not bad, as I had rolled my ankle many times before, so I just tried to shake it off. But this time felt different.

As soon as I got home, I took my shoe off, and my ankle was very swollen. I started to pray. Although I updated my parents on the situation, I wanted to pray about this by myself since I felt it would enhance my spiritual growth.

I went back to some ideas I had learned in the Christian Science Sunday School, like the seven synonyms for God. First, I started to pray about Spirit. God gave me all the spirit I needed to express myself fully on the field. I had passion for the game of soccer, and God supplied my energy so I could express Him. The one verse from the Bible I prayed with was, “Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me” (Psalms 23:4). I saw that the “staff” mentioned in this verse was God’s power and that He would comfort and strengthen me in times of need. I prayed with those ideas for the time leading up to the tournament and during the car ride to the event.

As I checked into the team’s hotel, a message from God came, assuring me that He is absolute Love. I thought about this idea in combination with a passage from Mary Baker Eddy’s spiritual interpretation of the Lord’s Prayer, “*And Love is reflected in love*” (*Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, p. 17). Since God loved me unconditionally, His love radiated through me and shined in my unconditional love of soccer. I prayed with this idea of love for the rest of the night, thinking of many ways that God loved me and all of the reasons that I love soccer.

In the morning, there was still pain and swelling in my ankle, and I could not put on a cleat at first. As game time approached, my team started to offer words of support, which I saw as love coming to

me from God. This example helped me better understand how God’s love works. I then had the courage to warm up, but was still skeptical about my ability to play. I’d decided that I would not play unless I had complete range of motion—I needed to be sure I wasn’t playing out of human will, but following God’s direction.

God is absolute Love.

As I stepped onto the field, I said to God, “I’m playing for You.” I then felt instant relief in my ankle and had my first sprint only seconds into my time on the field. I felt no pain and was able to execute my moves flawlessly. After the game, I knew that the absence of pain wasn’t about just temporarily forgetting it, but was due to me glorifying God’s love through soccer.

Despite this victory, that night I noticed the swelling was starting to come back. I again listened for God’s messages and realized I needed to see healing through to completion. This time, instead of turning to my love of soccer as I prayed, I turned my love more directly to God. Since I absolutely loved God and was listening to Him, I saw it was important to realize He was giving me everything I needed. I prayed through that night and before our next game. I felt confident God was strengthening me, and I didn’t feel skeptical of playing by game time. When I took the field, my ankle felt normal, and there was no pain throughout the rest of the tournament and the season. After our final game, I realized that even the simplest ideas about Love heal. ●

Alex Mietchen is a junior in high school and lives in Utah.



Originally published in the November 18, 2013, issue of the *Christian Science Sentinel*.

Spirituality and service in Costa Rica

by BRITTA HANSON

I am part of the National Leadership Council (NLC), a youth group for Christian Scientists. For our third summer in the program, my fellow NLCers and I traveled to Costa Rica on a community service trip. We all looked forward to having an opportunity to interact with the local children as well as fix up the area surrounding their school. We were excited to be able to help the local community, and we quickly started filling our heads with thoughts of big building projects—like maybe fixing up the school’s rodeo arena—and of being able to leave a positive mark that would last for years.

On our first day of service to the Costa Rican school, we were shuffled into different groups, each with a different task. Some of us got started moving a pile of wood from one spot to a different spot some 30 feet away, some of us painted watering cans, some of us dug holes, and some of us painted the school’s rusty metal fence with shiny new paint. Over the next several days, we continued with the same chores. We started to wonder: when would the large-scale building projects start?

The next day, when my group had finished painting the watering cans with one coat of blue paint each, we were handed the same cans for a second coat of paint. Later we were assigned to paint trash cans, and to paint the inside of the school’s rain shelter. The following day

we went out and painted water tanks that were located about ten minutes from the school. Basically, we had our fair share of painting!

As our group realized that we weren’t going to be completing any grand projects, we started to feel really down on what we were doing. It was a chore to get through each day, and while I can’t speak for everyone, I wasn’t feeling the satisfaction of work well done at the end of each day.

As our group took stock of how bad our attitude had become, we decided to do something about it. We held a town hall meeting, a meeting specifically for the teens—no adults present—to discuss our feelings toward the work and how best to go forward.

To be honest, we spent the first half hour or so complaining about our situation. We talked about how we weren’t being given the chance to help enough, and basically blamed the school for not letting us do enough for them. After some time though, the conversation switched to really evaluating our motives. We realized that we were being selfish, wanting to claim all the glory of community service for ourselves. We had gotten caught up in the idea that the bigger and better the project we did, the better we would feel about ourselves afterward! We weren’t putting the community’s needs first.

Eventually, we conceded that the

leaders who were instructing us on what service to do really knew what was important to the community, and that each minute of service we did for them was exactly what was needed. A quote in *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* by Mary Baker Eddy was relevant to our situation: “God never punishes man for doing right, for honest labor, or for deeds of kindness, though they expose him to fatigue, cold, heat, contagion” (p. 384). Sometimes our work felt repetitive and tiresome, but only good could come from the activities we were doing. Our time was not being wasted, and along with the community, we could only benefit from the work.

Once we changed our thought, our experience changed dramatically. Our spirits were lighter, the hours flew by and we definitely got more done. The relationships between our group, our mentors, and our Costa Rican guides grew stronger every day. When we departed the school for the last time, we were able to see the difference we had made. A large section of the rusted fence



*A more
spiritual outlook
transformed
our trip.*

was now a sparkling clean silver. The 20 or so trash cans that used to be faded and dirty were an electric blue. Though we hadn’t realized it at the time, a week’s worth of painting and touching up had really made a difference, and our guides were so grateful for the time we put into their school.

I was so grateful to see how a more spiritual outlook —being humbly willing to do whatever needed to be done, knowing that God was guiding us and the community leaders— had transformed our trip. The whole experience changed our views on motivation, and I think I can speak for the whole group in saying that we were as happy to have learned a spiritual lesson as we were to have been of benefit to the community in Costa Rica! ●

Britta Hanson is a senior in high school. In her free time she likes to read and play softball, and she’s also on the Nordic ski team at her school. She lives in Minnesota with her mom, dad, cat, and dog.

Originally published in the December 2, 2013, issue of the *Christian Science Sentinel*.

My prayers after nightmares

by MESA GOEBEL

It was the night after school let out for the summer. I was so excited for a fun and busy time! My heart soared at the thoughts of an adventure trip I would be taking with my NLC (National Leadership Council) DiscoveryBound class and then going to a summer camp for Christian Scientists. I fell asleep on the couch.

A few hours later I woke up, heart pounding. I had just experienced terrible nightmares. I glanced at the shadows in our house and out the windows, imagining kidnappers and other frightening characters. Fear crept into my mind and seemed to take hold; it wasn't going away. Telling myself that God was protecting me over and over again, I worked up the courage to get off the couch. I ran into my room and slid under the covers. I was unsure of how to pray about my situation.

I hadn't had nightmares for a long time, and kept on thinking: "You're being ridiculous, Mesa. No bad people are in the house. The dog would notice if someone was in here." That was getting me nowhere. I opened my thought to God and received the angel message that I needed to change my approach.

The right approach was to think spiritually and reject ungodlike thoughts. Mary Baker Eddy wrote: "Any contradictory fusion of Truth with error, in both

theory and practice, prevents one from healing scientifically ..." (*No and Yes*, p. 5).

To me, this meant that it would be tough to have a complete healing when I was leaning on this train of thought: "Oh, you're just imagining things. And the dog would keep you safe anyway." I grabbed my iPod and listened to hymns from the *Christian Science Hymnal*. I listened to Mary Baker Eddy's poem, set to music, called "Mother's Evening Prayer," or what many people call "O gentle presence," and it helped me to clear my thought. I reminded myself that "Life divine ... owns each waiting hour" (No. 207). I needed to reject error, or the false thought that there could be a power besides God. I also thought about the message in

Hymn No. 412. It starts,

O dreamer, leave thy dreams for joyful waking,
O captive, rise and sing, for thou art free;
The Christ is here, all dreams of error breaking,
Unloosing bonds of all captivity.
(Rosa M. Turner)

It helped me see that leaving the "dream" of fear is as simple as praying to God because He is always listening to our sincere prayers. >



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I can combat worry or nervousness when I open my thought to God.

My stomach was upset and I was sweaty from the nightmares. Then, I realized that there is a connection between a physical condition and thought. I realized that my atonement (my at-one-ment) with God was and always will be intact and nothing could change that. God is everywhere and the suggestion of fear could not harm me.

Praying in this way helped me, but I still couldn't fall asleep. Confusion tried to overwhelm me. How could I be affected by such *irrational* fears—fears about things that weren't even real? Then it dawned on me: all fear is irrational. There is no such thing as a *rational* fear in God's kingdom, since the idea that I could be separated from God is ridiculous. Fear is F.E.A.R.: false evidence appearing real. I could banish the fear because it was a mental suggestion and had no foundation. This idea eased the physical discomfort that I was having, and I felt better.

Finally, I opened up the Bible. I turned to Psalms, which always inspires me in some way. Psalm 23, verse 4, was perfect. "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." God is our protector. If we can walk through "the valley of the shadow of death" and have no fear, then we can feel safe anywhere. These thoughts helped me to fall asleep comfortably.

I am grateful for this healing. God helped me see that there is nothing to fear. I use this spiritual approach in my daily life when facing challenges. I can combat worry or nervousness when I open my thought to God. I am now a stronger healer when fear tries to approach me! ●

Mesa Goebel is a sophomore at Principia Upper School. She enjoys being a part of the DiscoveryBound National Leadership Council and loves to play volleyball and sing.

Originally published in the December 16, 2013, issue of the *Christian Science Sentinel*.

Traveling with Love

by ANN SARKISIAN

I spent last summer working in Boston, and I was excited to learn that one of my friends would be working in New York. I promised to visit her for a weekend.

My bus was scheduled to depart at 4 p.m. on Friday afternoon. As I left the office, my co-worker asked me to come to his desk to show me what he'd been working on. His request did not bother me, but I didn't get back to my room to pick up my bags until 3:20.

I left my room and walked to the subway. By the time I made it to the right platform, it was 3:45. I was getting nervous about missing my bus. I texted my friend to tell her that I was worried I might not make it; she told me to just tell her when I made it on the bus. I was afraid I wasn't going to! And if I missed the 4 o'clock bus, I'd have to wait hours to get another seat, since the route between Boston and New York is so heavily traveled. >

When the subway train finally came, I found myself getting frustrated with the long ride—it was getting late, and I wasn't even at the bus station yet. But while waiting, the thought came to me clearly to love my fellow travelers. I simply felt compelled to express love—not frustration or impatience—toward everyone around me. This idea was comforting, and I realized that expressing love was really the most important thing I

could do at that time. I'd attended a Christian Science testimony meeting the previous Wednesday, and the First Reader had read this passage from First John: "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear" (4:18). Simply thinking about the idea gave me a sense of calm. I smiled at those around me, praying to see them all as ideas of God, expressing His goodness.

As I recognized the Godlike qualities in others, it felt like a weight had been lifted. My thought was elevated, and my fear vanished. Recognizing the good that surrounded me allowed me to focus on God and His ideas. I declared silently that God had me in my right place, just as He had all of His ideas. God would guide me to wherever I needed to be—whether that was on the 4:00 bus, a later bus, or even not New York City at all.

I felt a sense of peace with those thoughts, and that's when I remembered a quote from *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* by Mary Baker Eddy that I'd written on a sticky note and stuck to my computer a few weeks prior: "The devotion of thought to an honest achievement makes the achievement possible" (p. 199). I'd been feeling guilty about not



I simply felt compelled to express love toward everyone around me.

leaving for the bus station earlier, and I did not want to let my friend down. But as I thought about this idea from *Science and Health*, I realized that doing my best to hold on to the truth of the situation—that I was loved, that I was in my right place—was directing my thought to an honest achievement. Soon, the train rolled up to my stop.

As I stepped off the train, I wanted to run to catch the bus—but I

didn't know where it would be. Again, I slowed down in order to focus and place full trust in God because I knew that He was still guiding me. All I needed to do was listen. I calmly took an elevator up to the second floor of the station and followed a man out the door to the left. I had no idea where I was, but as I looked to one side—there it was, my bus. I felt such relief. Not only did I make it on time, but it turned out that two buses were needed to accommodate everyone, and I was one of the first people to board the second bus.

I knew that the whole weekend could be this harmonious. My friend and I explored the city for two days, and with each new location I saw good unfolding. The most remarkable scene for me came from the top of Rockefeller Center. To see the city from such a height humbled me, and it reminded me that not only does God have a wonderful abundance of ideas, but He also directs them continuously. It was so clear to me that God is always in control. ●

Ann is a senior in college, studying English Literature and Art History. She plays for her university basketball team and loves spending time with her family and taking her three golden retrievers to the park.

Originally published in the December 30, 2013, issue of the *Christian Science Sentinel*.

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